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Release of Mr. O. T. P. Ramayya Nadar, a Civil Disobedience Prisoner of Virudunagar.

71 *Q.*—Mr. M. B. Rangaswami Reddi: Will the hon. the Law Member be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether political prisoners have been released before their time without any reason in this Presidency;

(*b*) if so, how many have been released and under what Act;

(*c*) why was Mr. O. T. P. Ramayya Nadar, Seventh Dictator, Virudunagar, convicted by the Subdivisional Magistrate, Sattur, for two years' rigorous imprisonment and Rs. 1,000 fine, released all on a sudden;

(*d*) why was the fine of Rs. 1,000 not refunded proportionately; and

(*e*) whether his fine has been reduced, and if so, when it will be refunded?

A.—(*a*) The sentences of some Civil Disobedience prisoners have been suspended. Each case was considered and decided on its merits.

(*b*) The sentences of 263 Civil Disobedience prisoners were suspended till the 14th July 1933. Action was taken under section 401, Criminal Procedure Code.

(*c*) The Government carefully considered the case of Mr. O. T. P. Ramayya Nadar and in the exercise of their discretion suspended his sentence.

(*d*) No portion of the fine was paid or collected.

(*e*) Does not arise.

[For further unstarred question please see page 180 infra.]

STARRED QUESTIONS

Law and Order—General

Release of political prisoners in the Presidency.

* 72 *Q.*—Mr. Abdul Hameed Khan: Will the hon. the Home Member be pleased to state—

(*a*) the number of political prisoners in the various jails in the Presidency;

(*b*) the number that was released during the last two months stating the number of those that had completed their terms and those that were released before they completed their term of imprisonment; and

(*c*) whether the Government are proposing to release the political prisoners before their terms of imprisonment are completed and if so, by what date and whether all of them would be released?

A.—(*a*) The number of civil disobedience prisoners in jail on the 30th June was 480.

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(b) The total number released during the months of May and June was 336. Of these, 144 were prematurely released before the expiry of their terms of imprisonment, including 7 who were released on tendering apologies. The remainder, namely 192, were released on the expiry of their terms of imprisonment in the ordinary course.

(c) The Government will continue to use their discretion in the matter.

Mr. Abdul Hameed Khan:—" May I know, Sir, whether the Government are contemplating the release of the remaining political prisoners at an early date?"

The hon. Diwan Bahadur Sir M. Krishnan Nayar:—" Not at an early date. In fact the Government are considering each case on its own merits."

Mr. Abdul Hameed Khan:—" May I request the hon. the Law Member to consider the case of such of those prisoners, as for instance the members of the Sitanagaram Ashram, who have been sentenced to long terms of imprisonments of three years and so on, as early as possible?"

The hon. Diwan Bahadur Sir M. Krishnan Nayar:—" I am afraid I cannot make any promise. I shall consider the suggestion."

Forests

Withdrawal of forest concessions in the South Kanara district.

* 73 Q.—Mr. U. C. Subrahmanya Bhatt: Will the hon. the Law Member be pleased to state—

(a) whether the Government or the Collector of South Kanara have received representations from the people of Kargal and other villages of Coondapoor taluk and from other villagers of other taluks regarding the cancellation by the Conservator of Forests, Madras, of the privileges enjoyed by the villagers of this district from time immemorial to remove firewood, manure leaves and other forest produce for their daily agricultural and domestic purposes from the reserve forests;

(b) if so, whether the Government will be pleased to place such representations on the table of the House as well as a copy of the proceedings of the Conservator of Forests cancelling the said privileges;

(c) whether it is a fact that when on a former occasion the forest authorities obstructed the villagers in the exercise of their privileges, the Government on the representation of the villagers recognized the said privileges and granted them the concessions of taking green manure leaves, dried leaves, thorn, brushwood and other forest produce from all trees except classified trees in the reserve forests of South Kanara;

(d) if so, whether the Government will be pleased to place a copy of the said Government Order on the table of the House and state how the conditions have now changed; and

(e) why the Chief Conservator of Forests cancelled the said privileges?